

# EASTON SHOVEL TOWN CULTURAL DISTRICT

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## Technical Assistance Report

September 2012

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Technical Assistance  
provided to and in  
Collaboration with:  
Town of Easton Cultural  
District Planning Committee,  
Carolyn Cole, Chairman

Technical Assistance  
Sponsored by:  
***Massachusetts Downtown  
Initiative***



Department of Housing and  
Community Development

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Prepared by:

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## Overview of Technical Assistance

It was my pleasure to work with the Easton Cultural District Committee over the last few months to assist in the initial planning work for the establishment of a Cultural District. The consulting services were funded through a Technical Assistance Grant provided by the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Program (sponsored by the Department of Housing and Community Development). The following table provides an overview of the tasks completed and work products.

Date	Tasks Completed	Affiliated Work Products	
6.5.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone conference with Committee Chair to discuss status of Cultural District, develop agenda for initial work session and request pertinent information.</li> </ul>		
6.7.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tour the proposed Cultural District (CD) and meet with Committee Chairman and Chairman of Selectman Board to discuss issues and determine the type of assistance that would be most helpful.</li> <li>Work Session with Committee Chairman to review minutes from initial CD Meet &amp; Greet Session; sort and group the ideas that came out of that meeting and develop a list of potential teams to be formed to take on various topics.</li> </ul>	1.	Meeting Notes - 6.7.12, page 4
June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review material provided by Committee Chair such as list of cultural assets, proposed boundaries, Shovel Shop redevelopment project information and listing of on-going events.</li> <li>Research other Cultural Districts, contact MCC for information and guidance</li> <li>Prepare a technical memo with examples from other communities and suggestions covering the following topics:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundaries</li> <li>Vision</li> <li>Goals</li> <li>Mapping Strategies/Action Steps to Goals</li> <li>Metric – Measuring Impact</li> <li>Economic Development</li> <li>Management</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	2.	Technical Memo - 6.27.12, page 6
6.28.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Session with Committee Chairman to review the issues in the Technical Memo and determine next steps</li> </ul>		

July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop electronic survey to obtain feedback from committee members about Vision, Goals and Objectives for the Cultural District.</li> <li>• Implement survey electronically, work with Committee Chair to distribute survey link.</li> <li>• Summarize survey results in written report.</li> <li>• Communicate with Committee Chair about survey results, issues for next committee meeting, and progress</li> </ul>	3.	Survey Results Report, 7.8.12, page 18
August 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research artist cooperatives, in response to Town decision to dedicate a building for a Visitor Center and (yet to be developed) Artist Cooperative</li> <li>• Prepare memo providing information and examples covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Sample By-Laws for a Main Street Type Artist Co-op</li> <li>II. Articles Relating to How to Start a art co-op</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	4.	Technical Memo - 8.6.12, page 25
Sept. 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review some preliminary draft materials in preparation for the MA Cultural District Application</li> <li>• Prepare memo providing some observations and suggestions regarding the CD Application materials.</li> </ul>	5.	Session Agenda & Materials – 9.14.12, page 36

The work products follow.

# WORK PRODUCT ONE

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## **Easton Shovel Town Cultural District**

### **Notes from 6.7.12 Work Session**

Grouping of ideas from the Meet & Greet into topics for Potential Teams:

#### **1. Music & Entertainment**

- Summer Concert Series
- Story Tellers
- Outdoor Cinema
- Performance Art explored/music/song, theatre groups, etc.
- Local Theatre
- Fairs & festival ideas: Ethnic Food Fair, Cultural Diversity Festival, Snowman Festival, Winter Festival or Anytime-Open Historical Homes for Tours

#### **2. Marketing**

- Web Page/Blog
- Community Survey-What do people want
- Decorated Shovels/Potato Heads, etc...contest

#### **3. Gallery& Studio Space/Artisan Co-op**

- Gallery Space for all arts
- Artist Studio-Produce Exhibit Art
- Open studios

#### **4. Fundraising/Anthropology Dinner**

- Anthropological Dinner...possible using Ames Estate Recipes

#### **5. Arts Education**

- Art Classes/young adults/financially challenged
- Outdoor Garden Classrooms
- Destination Imagination-Develop Group in Easton
- Use Outdoors to Create Art

Other topics from Meet & Greet not covered by teams:

- Theatre Arts (particularly children)
- Recreation

## WORK PRODUCT TWO

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### **Easton Shovel Town Cultural District**

**To:** Carolyn Cole  
**From:** Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates (On behalf of  
DHCD Downtown Initiative Program)  
**Subject:** Easton Cultural District Assessment and Guidance  
**Date:** June 27, 2012

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Work Product #2

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It was great meeting with you and Colleen. Thank you for the tour of the district. I can see where you have many cultural assets and a beautiful community. And, there appears to be terrific enthusiasm for the creation of a cultural district and commitment from many potential partners. It seems that you are well on your way with regard to asset and amenities and have made a good start with programming and marketing.

I am providing below some comments on other various aspects of the district. My intention is to provide a little guidance as things move forward. The areas that are addressed in this memo include:

- I. Boundaries
- II. Vision
- III. Goals
- IV. Mapping Strategies/Action Steps to Goals
- V. Metric – Measuring Impact
- VI. Economic Development
- VII. Management

It is clear that you have a lot of activities and programming underway. I think the most productive next steps would be to work with the stakeholders to develop a Vision Statement and some well-defined strategic goals (that are specific to the Easton Shovel Works Cultural District). This is discussed further in the text that follows.

As we discussed at our last meeting, I have been trying to obtain examples of information about other cultural districts. I have made several attempts to get examples from MCC but have not been successful. So, I have been doing Internet research and contacting cultural districts directly to get materials. This has been a surprisingly time-consuming process but has surfaced some useful information. I have included many examples intended to illustrative not prescriptive. A few examples are from Massachusetts-designated Cultural Districts; the rest are from undesignated districts in Massachusetts or cultural districts from out of state.

## **I. Boundaries**

I think it would be a good idea to work towards developing a map with the cultural district boundaries delineated. I didn't quite get my bearings when we were touring the

District so I am not making any judgment about the proposed boundaries. But, I think that the proposed boundaries should be reviewed to make sure that meet the following:

- the boundaries highlight and focus attention on the cultural/commercial facilities, in other words, not including a lot of intervening residential property
- the boundaries are justifiable
- the district is compact and walkable
- there is a sense of place to the district
- you can “feel the edges”

(There can be cultural facilities not located within the district boundaries that can be connected to the district – for example, a kiosk in the district that advertises performances at a theater beyond the boundaries.)

## II. Vision

A good next step would be to work with the stakeholders to develop a vision for the cultural district. The vision statement should describe what you would like the district to be, in other words, **what would a successful cultural district look like**. This should be a vision unique to Easton and developed by consensus with stakeholders. There are a number of different ways you can go about this that we can discuss. Here are some examples of Vision Statements.

### Ames Cultural District

“In the future, the Ames Main Street Cultural District will be known as a unique, vibrant and visually interesting shopping, dining and entertainment destination. The city’s historic center will become the focal point of a vibrant Ames economy providing more appeal to residents, visitors and students. This economic growth will increase retail sales, property values, business profits, rents and an improved tax base. The District will be a natural gathering space and serve as a link to the civic, cultural and public resources in the community. The Ames Main Street Cultural District will be a friendly, safe and inviting place, every day all day!”

### Worcester Arts District

“The vision of the Arts District is a revitalized Main Street with vibrant shops, a variety of restaurants, galleries, places to listen to music, buy books, CD’s or unique gifts, drink coffee, meet friends, and feel comfortable.”

### James River Arts & Cultural District

“The James River Arts & Culture District will be a visually and actively vibrant area of downtown Lynchburg where business and residential life come together through arts and culture. The District includes three connected areas: Downtown, Rivermont Avenue to Cabell Street, and Fifth Street.”



### Fenway Cultural District

“Our vision for the Fenway Cultural District is to provide a cultural environment that merges both the historical and contemporary elements of the Fenway, into a welcoming and creative experience for residents of the area, residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as well as national and international visitors of all ages. True to the visionary leadership and spirit of the historical icons with in our community, we will continuously innovate to create an urban space that provides creative and educational experiences that are culturally and intellectually relevant, especially engaging, and contribute to the economic vitality of the district, thereby serving as a model for other cultural districts in the state as well as across the nation.”

### Kowloon

“To develop the WKCD into an integrated arts and cultural district that will:

- provide quality culture, entertainment and tourism programs with a must-visit appeal to both local residents and visitors from around the world;
- meet the long-term infrastructure needs of Hong Kong's arts and cultural development and foster organic growth and development of culture and creative industries; and
- become a cultural hub for attracting and nurturing talents, an impetus to improve quality of life, as well as a cultural gateway to the Pearl River Delta.

## **III. Goals**

The goals of the MA Cultural District Program are as follows:

1. attract artists and cultural enterprises
2. encourage business and job development
3. establish the district as a tourism destination
4. preserve and reuse the stork buildings
5. enhance property values
6. foster local cultural development

The goals stated above are the over-arching goals. Each cultural district should create goals that are specific to their community. According to Kylie Sullivan from MCC, they have seen goals that range from “encourage seasonal businesses to stay open longer” to “develop a new community arts center” to “get more people to come off the highway”.

The list of 18 or so ideas that came up as areas of interest in the “Easton Meet and Greet” session appear to fall into the following categories: 1) music and entertainment programming, 2) gallery & studio space, 3) arts education, 4) marketing and 5) fundraising/anthropology dinner. These could be the basis of working with stakeholders to develop goals and strategies.

Below are some examples of goals from cultural districts. I'm not presenting these as necessarily stellar examples; they are just intended to be illustrative. In fact, in the second, third and fourth examples presented below, MCC might view these goals as too broad and needing to be refined and more specific/authentic to the locale.

#### Fenway

To create a highly respected statewide and national brand by:

- marketing and promote our area as an exciting cultural destination for local residents all citizens of the Commonwealth and national and international visitors and tourists.
- To continue to provide the largest day of free cultural experience in greater Boston—opening our doors—to the public
- to create additional cultural programming through creative partnerships and through our Fenway cultural district committee
- to use traditional media, public relations, and social media to build awareness of the fund Fenway cultural district
- to promote our numerous academic and cultural institutions, and link them, whenever possible, to our cultural endeavors
- to build on and coordinate activities with members of the Fenway alliance and are more broad-based Fenway cultural district committee

To increase the beauty and vitality of our district by:

- creating an easily navigable area for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists with aesthetically appropriate wayfinding signage
- encouraging the involvement of local businesses to contribute to creating a more vibrant urban space by working in collaboration with the Fenway cultural district committee to increase the beauty and vitality of our major thoroughfares: Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the arts and Massachusetts Avenue/Avenue of music through: streetscape thing, cultural programming, and public arts.

To provide opportunities for artists and institutions to promote their art, academic and cultural experiences . . .

#### Riverculture

- Build a strong, cultural community that contributes to the success of its partner organizations.
- Build a strong, diverse base of support for cultural economic development among community, political, cultural, educational and business leaders.
- Establish art and culture as a highly visible element of the region's identity.
- Establishing an environment that attracts businesses, residents and visitors
- Foster live/work/retail space, studios and new arts facilities in available properties throughout Turners Falls

#### Ames

- Showcase the vitality of arts and cultural venues, unique businesses, and the heritage of downtown Ames, which will add to the quality of life for residents and visitors.
- Organize event and retail promotions that increase consumer patronage of the district.
- Enhance partnerships among the public and private sectors: retail, culture, service and hospitality.
- Maintain the MSCD environment with green spaces, public art, well-designed window displays, and convenient access for visitors.
- Promote historic preservation and development of buildings and infrastructure through second-use projects, upper story renovation, façade improvement, residential development, and new construction.
- Retain current and recruit new businesses to create a healthy balance and variety of retail, professional, and service entities.

#### Kowloon

- To enhance and promote excellence, innovation, creativity and diversity in arts and culture;
- To enhance the appreciation of a diverse and pluralistic range of the arts;
- To develop new and experimental works in arts and culture;
- To cultivate and nurture local talents in the arts (including local artists), and local arts groups and arts-related personnel;
- To encourage wider participation by the local community in arts and culture;
- To promote and provide arts education to the local community;
- To facilitate the development of cultural and creative industries;
- To encourage community, commercial and corporate support and sponsorship of arts and culture

### **IV. Mapping Strategies/Action Steps to Goals**

Ideally, you should work toward having action steps/strategies that map to each of your goals. This can include on-going activities as well as new planned actions. I have been searching for good examples of this and cannot say that I have been able to put my hands on really terrific models but below are a few examples that should help.

#### James River Arts and Cultural District

**Communications:** Ways to disseminate information to public regarding JRACD

- Competition to create logo
- Physical markers – signs designating the JRACD

- District designation flags – color coded for each of 3 mini districts
- Brochure – includes information regarding restaurants, shopping, district sights/sites, and other information deemed necessary
  - Include map – depicting the JRACD and its amenities
  - Info regarding BPOL tax abatement and other available incentives
  - Arts related business would be part of First Friday events
- Information locations (Kiosk/ Visitors Center) – place with which to disseminate information; (possibly called art boxes)
- Encourage LL, JRC, and CVB to add JRCAH pages to their web sites

**Events:** Happenings in the James River Arts & Culture District to bring visitors and residents to the downtown area.

- Festivals – bring arts, bateau, beer & music festivals to Riverfront Park
- Maintain and grow First Fridays – Facilitate the expansion of First Fridays with district organizations and businesses – especially kid & elderly activities earlier in the day
- Street musicians – encourage and/or facilitate a musical street scene
- Kids projects – create/facilitate events for parents to bring children to district area
- New Year’s Eve/First Night Festivities – create and/or facilitate a yearly downtown event free and open to the public
- District arts & cultural organizations – work with these organizations to strengthen their programs
- Maintain “Get Downtown” – work with Lynch’s Landing to make this event a continued success

**Attractions:** Features or venues in the James River Arts & Culture District that will draw attention to the area or can be used for events.

- Riverfront Park – make use of the park for more events and public art
- Public Art Features – encourage and/or facilitate the erection of outdoor art
- 5th Street Roundabout – work with 5th Street CDC to commission a public art project for the circle and four corners of the roundabout space
- Water Fountain – give the fountain a more visually enticing structure with which to lure people to the riverfront area
- Artist Galleries – encourage the opening of art galleries by and for artists
- Encourage city to give tax break to landlords who rent to galleries
- Concert Hall – encourage and/or facilitate the building or renovation of a downtown property for a public city concert hall
- Encourage/facilitate the completion of the Academy of Music Theater
- Encourage the completion of the Lower Bluffwalk project and promote and encourage its role as an arts venue

**Aesthetics:** Visual indications of the James River Arts & Culture District that contribute to the attractiveness of the area.

- Public Art projects – encourage or facilitate creation of public art projects
- Streetscape:
  - Flower containers – create more inviting, cheerful tone to the district
  - Public Benches – create places for conversation and relaxation
  - Street lighting – make streets more inviting during evening hours
- Open venues: develop best practices to encourage restaurants, shops, galleries, museums, residences, theaters to remain open longer and/or have more performances/events

**Funding:** Means with which to accomplish the goals set out in this plan.

- Grants funded by city amusement tax collections in the District and administered by the Office of Economic Development
- Other grant sources such as the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Greater Lynchburg Community Trust, and any other city appropriations
- Capital Improvement funding from the City of Lynchburg in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan

**Partners:** The Planning Group recommends the following organizations for partnerships . . .

#### Worcester Art District

The **goals** for the District include the desire for:

- Places for artist/public interaction: coffee shops, galleries, performance spaces.
- Multiple choices and a diversity of uses to foster a rich creative environment.
- A safe environment.
- Affordable artist live/work space.
- Ownership opportunities for artists.
- Good opportunities to exhibit work.
- Accessible transportation and parking for visitors.
- Strong recognition of the District; very visible positive image.
- Organization of events & places, one central place to get all info you need.
- Good social environment for artist interaction with their peers.
- Diversity and multiplicity of choices and uses.
- Unique experience for residents and visitors.

**Actions** for Success:

- Create a strong image of Worcester as a cultural city.
- Market to artists and patrons alike - aggressive marketing campaign is needed.
- Artists are small businesses. Treat them as such.

- Tap into student markets for potential residents and customers. Tap into their parents as a market.
- City must continue to take a strong leadership position on this project.
- Create affordable artist live/work space quickly, before space in the District becomes unaffordable.
- Coordinate code enforcement agencies so code requirements are clear (building department, fire department).
- Plan for gentrification – protect current residents

## Syracuse

### ARTS, CULTURE, EVENTS DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT				
To energize the community to enhance the vitality of Downtown Syracuse as a regional cultural center				

**Goal 1: To designate downtown Syracuse as the center of arts and culture.**

Strategies	Responsible	Start Date	Comp Date	Comments
1. Brainstorm ways to increase the visibility of the cultural district	Chuckie, Carolyn, Jeff, Eileen			Partner with Convention and Visitor's Bureau
2. Identify funding source(s) for Arts, Culture, Events Downtown district	Kate, Alex	3/27/01		
3. Create proposal for designating downtown as an arts and cultural district	Chuckie, Kate, Alex	TBD		Start with business case Involve cultural groups
4. Seek governmental approval and incentives for designation of district	Chuckie, Kate, Alex, Sherri	TBD		

**Goal 2: To serve as a catalyst to foster collaboration and communications among cultural groups, businesses, and community leaders.**

Strategies	Responsible	Start Date	Comp Date	Comments
1. Convening of arts, cultural, events key players – to discuss and participate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syracuse Opera, Symphony, MOST, Syracuse Stage, Delevan Center, etc.</li> </ul>	Chuckie, Tony, Melanie		TBD	Partner with Gifford Foundation?
2. Revisit (individual meetings) govt., business, neighborhood key players, and cultural organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown Committee</li> <li>• Syracuse 2020</li> <li>• TNT Downtown</li> <li>• City/County Officials</li> <li>• Syracuse Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Syracuse Convention and Visitor's Bureau</li> <li>• Syracuse School District</li> </ul>	Chuckie, Gracia, and others	TBD		After proposal is complete
3. Foster a social network among arts and cultural groups	Heidi, Phil, Gracia		TBD	

**Goal 3: To increase community awareness, knowledge, and support of arts and culture.**

Strategies	Responsible	Start Date	Comp Date	Comments
1. Communicate progress via the FOCUS website (business case is on FOCUS website under "Updates" @ <a href="http://www.focussyracuse.org">www.focussyracuse.org</a> )	FOCUS	Ongoing	Ongoing	
2. Participate on the Downtown Marketing Committee to develop communication and marketing strategies to all audiences	Downtown Marketing Committee that includes FOCUS representatives	Ongoing		
3. Support visual and performing art in visible public places	Arts, Culture, Events Downtown, Downtown TNT, Downtown Committee, Arts Organizations, Artists	TBD	TBD	

**Goal 4: To create a cultural climate that improves the quality of life in downtown Syracuse leading to economic development.**

Strategies	Responsible	Start Date	Comp Date	Comments
1. Support strategic lighting projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everson</li> <li>• Streetscape from Everson to Columbus Circle/Courthouse/Erie Canal Museum</li> </ul>	Everson, County, Niagara Mohawk  City, County, Niagara Mohawk, OHA	5/00  5/00	December 2001  Spring 2002	
2. Support Signage and Beautification Committee	FOCUS, Syracuse Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Kate, Chuckie, Judy, Tony, Jinx, Bob Welcher	7/18/00	On-going	Look at use of planters, banners or other creative markers
3. Participate in and support Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor and Hyett Palma Downtown report of 2001	Downtown Committee, MDA, Chuckie, Tony, Kate, Melanie, Columbus Circle Cultural Corridor Committee (Walt), OHA		On-going	
4. Communicate and collaborate with downtown developers	Kate, Alex, Bill, Steve		On-going	

## V. Metrics – Measuring Impact

As you develop goals, you should work toward developing a procedure for measuring the progress on these goals. At a minimum for the state application, you would need to have a plan to collect visitor and occupancy information. The plan should identify what data will be collected and who will be responsible for collecting it. As you move forward, this may entail getting commitments from each partner to collect certain data, the planning department to collect certain data and/or develop a plan for the use of volunteers in data collection.

### Visitor Data

At a minimum, visitor data would include how many people attended events. Eventually a more sophisticated economic impact survey/study could be performed to determine what type of economic impact the visitors have on local businesses due to spending habits associated with events and the potential image-change in the community.

Example: Riverculture, in Turners Falls has contracted with UMass Dartmouth to conduct 3 economic impact studies over last several years.

#### Occupancy Data

This refers to real estate based metrics that measure progress in attracting and retaining businesses. At a minimum, there should be some kind of annual accounting for the number and type of businesses (and employment, if possible). Eventually, you should also work toward measuring other economic impacts such as job creation and the impact the cultural district has on business sales and business decisions to stay in the community. This might be measured through the use of business surveys.

### **VI. Economic Development**

There appears to be terrific enthusiasm for the creation of a cultural district and much excitement over various activities. One area that probably requires more attention as you move forward is how the cultural district can truly be an economic development effort. For the state designation, the goal to increase revenue for local enterprises should be clearly incorporated in the district plan. Business owners should be engaged in programming for the district. The district plan might include strategies to assist the development of creative/and or other businesses. A cultural district is more likely to receive state designation if it is likely to create new jobs and new or expanded businesses.

### **VII. Management/Governance**

It is helpful to have a clear plan for managing the cultural district. For the state designation, the application requires you to describe the partnership and the management plan, the governance structure, how often the partnership will meet and if there will be a staff person. The municipality should be engaged and the partnership should be representative of the district. In some cases, it can also be helpful to have relationships with external partners that can support implementation. There should be a clear policy and strategy/action plan.

Here is an example of a management structure:

#### Rockport

The **Governance Team** will consist of the following:

- Rockport Economic Development Committee
- Rockport Division of the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce
- Rockport Art Association
- Rockport Music
- Merchants' Representative
- Restaurants' Representative
- Festivals Committee



Specifically, the Rockport Economic Development Committee will handle the administrative function of calling meetings and coordinating communications, while the Rockport Division of the Cape Ann. The Chamber of Commerce will provide web-based information and support, to provide a framework for the benefit of the entire team.

**Responsibilities:**

- will convene, coordinate, and communicate local efforts and initiatives to the wider group of partners and stakeholders and will act as a clearinghouse for information as needed;
- will arrange meetings with partners and stakeholders as necessary;
- will set up subcommittees to work on specific projects or efforts; and
- will oversee planning and promotional activities
- will oversee budget preparations and finance management

**Meetings:** There will be quarterly meetings, with one of those being an Annual Meeting, where an update will be provided to partners and stakeholders. These meetings will be held at a mutually agreeable time to ensure that all team members can attend.

## WORK PRODUCT THREE

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### **Easton Shovel Town Cultural District**

**To:** Carolyn Cole  
**From:** Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates (On behalf of  
DHCD Downtown Initiative Program)  
**Subject:** Easton Cultural District Vision and Goals Survey  
**Date:** July 9, 2012

A survey was sent to the individuals that participated in the May “Cultural District Meet and Greet” session. The purpose of the survey was to obtain input regarding the vision and goals for the Cultural District. We received 14 responses. The survey results are summarized in the following memo. This summary is intended to inform the executive committee discussion regarding vision and goals at the July 10, 2012 meeting.

### **Vision**

We asked respondents to describe their Vision for the Easton Shovel Town Cultural District by completing the following sentence.

**"Five years from now, the Shovel Town Cultural District will..."**

... be bustling with people darting in and out of the stores and businesses along Main Street and the surrounding side streets. It will be a destination spot with unique flavors and sights that will draw folks from surrounding towns. There will be an artistic flair in the air with regular studio tours, gallery showings, musical offerings and sidewalk events to draw visitors. There will be a sense of community pride with different groups in town joining together to present imaginative programming.

... attract visitors from around the area - who have arrived via train. The town center, an easy, attractive walk will be lovely, with brick sidewalks, gas-style lanterns, flowers, and benches. An outdoor cafe in the nice weather is filled with conversation and laughter. The shops are filled with boutique items, gift items, flowers, art work. A bike rental shop is there, with riders heading up to Borderland, an easy ride from here. Stonehill College families, in town to check out the area, are admiring the attractive center and wondering if they should take in the Independent film festival taking place at the small movie theatre on Center St. (where it used to be). Some of the walkers are heading to their cars, parked in the town lot in back - landscaped with trees, flowers and brick walk way at the back of the Main Street stores. Some are heading over to the new Ames Park across from the railroad station. In winter, there's a skating pond, and cross-country skiing. A welcoming, warming hut with Hot cider, coffee and a stone fire pit is by the pond and the lawns, covered with snow.

... have spawned new small businesses, have planned and held cultural events that appeal to toddlers, teens, parents, empty nesters, and seniors.

... have a series of well lit landscaped pathways leading from safe parking areas guiding pedestrians through gardens to various venues including a museum and open art studio that features local art/artists with workshops for all age groups, a community theater that features musical and theatrical entertainment, several eateries including a family friendly coffee house with open mic nights and poetry slams.

... have created a town center where many people go to meet, eat and be inspired by culture. I would love to see a thriving cafe/bistro, and Perk's type coffee shop, or a few, with local art for sale on the walls, perhaps open mike nights, or piano bar. Or "unplugged" guitar music with singer. Something modeled after Wellesley or Falmouth.

... be a vibrant, fun place where families, kids, seniors will like to hang out in a park-like setting. It will have boutique-like shops and an artist gallery. There will be an outdoor stage (not too big) where occasionally the public can be treated to a musical event or performance like poetry reading, etc., all very casual. An ice cream store in the summer, and a winter sports rental shop serving hot chocolate.

... be a beautiful gathering place for people of all ages and all ethnic groups, where there will be entertainment, eating, playing and big fun.

... have a community theater with space to offer acting, singing and dance classes. Also artists studios plus gallery space that can be used for regular art shows, art classes, small concerts etc. Several new restaurants, and or coffee houses (not chains) with some individual character that can be part of an "art stroll" evening once a month that will bring people in for plays, open studios and lunch and or dinner at restaurants.

... be a thriving and defined area where artists and musicians can find both support as well as an audience.

... be vibrant, active, popular, and supported by both the community and region as a whole.

... be a unique & vibrant cultural, commercial & entertainment community while maintaining and improving the historic integrity of the district

... provide a place to both enjoy and partake in art and culture for myself and my family.

. . . be well on its way to being a landmark destination in the deep South of Boston (the area between 128 & 495, west of 24 and south of 95). Rather than going to Boston or Providence, folks from Easton and the adjacent communities begin converging on the Cultural district for a steady stream of engaging, enlightening and inspirational programs led by local individuals and organizations.

. . . be an active place with thriving businesses and people on the streets, walking, cycling, etc.

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*The responses appeared to have some common themes, such as:*

- *Thriving vibrant, bustling, people on the streets*
- *Destination, attract visitors, landmark*
- *Arts on display*
- *Arts entertainment – music, poetry, theatre, film*

## **Goals and Objectives**

The overarching goals of cultural districts are:

- to foster local cultural development, attract artists and cultural enterprises,
- create a tourism destination,
- encourage business and job development, and
- preserve and reuse historic buildings.

We asked respondents . . . With that in mind, **what SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES would you like to see the Shovel Town Cultural District accomplish over the next few years?**

*The objectives that were stated by the respondents appeared to fall under several common themes:*

- *Promote business development in the District, especially restaurants.*
- *Create opportunities for artisans to display and sell art, including creation of an Artist Co-Op.*
- *Market the District; attract visitors from Easton and throughout the region*
- *Improve access, parking and amenities in the District.*
- *Renovate and reuse historic buildings; promote full utilization of Oakes Ames Hall; create awareness of historic significance.*
- *Promote regularly scheduled cultural programming including music and entertainment.*
- *Promote arts education for children and adults.*

- *Facilitate development of community performing arts theater.*
- *Encourage community involvement; promote collaboration and coordination.*

The responses have been grouped under these major themes below.

**Promote business development in the District, especially restaurants**

- Have a great coffee shop where people can sit and relax during their visit to Easton (in District itself).
- Outdoor dining areas?
- An upscale Boston restaurant.
- Encourage a restaurant to take residence that will provide take-out/ box lunch type service in addition to regular service so people can Picnic behind library or provide extra green space for picnicking within walking distance
- Eateries
- Establish a home away from home business - that is a coffee/dessert house (literally) with separate rooms where individuals (including students) and/or small groups can read, socialize in the evenings or hold small meetings
- Fill old Main street cafe location with new restaurant as focal point on Main
- Fill vacant store fronts on main street
- Have a gourmet market in town, walkable from the new Shovel Shop complex townhouses, and easy access to the Train Station.
- A vegetarian restaurant.
- Have a great restaurant that people can eat at during their visit to Easton (in District itself).
- Replace with a new venue of shops
- Increased business enterprises
- Provide a nice restaurant in town; Whether gourmet, or a Malt Shop where the youngsters would hang out after school
- Attracting an elegant Cafe to the area would help!

**Create opportunities for artisans to display and sell art including creation of Artist Co-Op**

- An artist's co-op.
- Art space/studios
- Art gallery;
- Open an artist co-op
- Create opportunities for artists to exhibit and sell art: galleries, restaurants, offices, bed and breakfasts, guesthouses and/or inns.
- Have a building where artists can rent studios, give classes, and hold open studios to sell work (similar to the model seen in the Emerson Umbrella Center in Concord, MA)
- Venue for local artist output
- Have studios that can be rented by local artists for a reasonable rate.
- Provide a place where artists of every type can meet, converse, work, play, display, share, teach and role model.
- Have an annual art fair that allows local artists to sell their work.

**Market the District; attract visitors from Easton and throughout the region**

- A visitor's center.

- Budget for marketing
- Brochures that encourage tourists and businesses to the area
- Effective marketing & promotion of the district
- Ensure that the district takes full advantage of local community media outlets.
- Website that coordinates and publicizes all cultural activity

#### **Improve access, parking and amenities in the District**

- Attractive parking area in back of the buildings on Main St; and make some of those backs into shops?
- Enable Pedestrian Friendly and alternative modes of transportation to, from and within the Cultural District
- Provide more parking to encourage foot traffic
- Bike rentals.
- The street / sidewalks need to be repaired and made attractive - the sidewalk slants dangerously, especially in winter, discourages walkers, and there is no reason to go downtown now.
- Parking with lighting and signage
- Pathways with lighting and signage
- Improve parking and sidewalks, especially the town lot behind the Children's Museum
- Hoping for spacious and easy access parking, don't need any parking challenges or problems
- District should have no unfinished construction or eye sores, it should be clean, safe and complete,
- Public bathrooms
- Advocate for a dedicated fiber optic connection in the district (Internet2 connecting via Stonehill)
- The rockery - is not too attractive; Light it in way that becomes the focal point of downtown; (Sorry, but the Christmas village set-up is pretty shabby looking these days; Isn't there something more "Victorian" to do to decorate the town center at the winter holidays?

#### **Renovate and reuse historic buildings; promote full utilization of Oakes Ames Hall; create awareness of historic significance**

- Upgrade use of Oakes Ames Hall
- The Oakes Ames Memorial Hall is a wonderful building and a great space that is under utilized. This building, and/or something renovated (the old barn on the Shovel Shop property?) could be used to create a theater and studio space for artist studios, dance lessons, music lessons, etc.
- Community use buildings
- Coordinating signage to let visitors know the history of each location
- Costumes for the staff through out the complex adds effect and completeness.
- Rehab, restore, or tear down vacant properties in the village area and revitalize them as residences or businesses
- Restorations & universal access upgrades to historic buildings
- The old house on corner (Joyce Lawyer?) needs to be rehabbed. It's an EYESORE.
- Re-do the old, unattractive buildings on Center Street (Hardware and Yoga studio), Consider putting the movie theatre there where it once was
- Demolish the building on corner of Williams St. (an eyesore)
- Museum

#### **Promote regularly scheduled cultural programming including music and entertainment**

- Regular Music Programs
- Regular ongoing entertainment events
- Regularly scheduled community events
- Work towards a steady stream of evening events including the weekend nights. (Cinema, performance, art openings)
- Like to see expansion of Fine Arts activities - particularly in the area of Film - building on the Hockomock Film Festival.
- Hold a music Festival and outdoor concerts every summer showcasing all types of musical acts
- Regular Yoga, Tai Chai, etc..
- Maybe some special days or moments designated for the poor or sick

#### **Promote arts education for children and adults**

- Entertain and teach through music, art, history and performances, etc.
- Educational programs and community spaces encouraging art & culture
- Children's Art, Music, Photography Classes
- Children's area for art and music.
- Have developed a close coordination with the Easton school system such that students can get instrumental lessons after school.

#### **Facilitate development of community performing arts theater**

- Community theater
- Have a theatre or performance center for plays and movies, host a film festival (like Provincetown)
- Have a vibrant, well-attended community theater that includes equity actors in some productions.
- Establish a community theatre in the main street area
- Establish multiple dedicated artmaking and performance spaces

#### **Encourage community involvement; promote collaboration and coordination**

- Support and foster a means for coordinated communication between programs throughout the district.
- Interchanging of Programs and Ideas with all groups
- Cohesiveness of Volunteer Services
- Community involvement



## WORK PRODUCT FOUR

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### **Easton Shovel Town Cultural District**

**To:** Carolyn Cole  
**From:** Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates (On behalf of  
DHCD Downtown Initiative Program)  
**Subject:** Information Related to Artist Cooperatives  
**Date:** August 6, 2012

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**Work Product #4**

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Congratulations on getting the Town to dedicate the use of the building for a Visitor Center/Artist Co-operative. I am enclosing some information about artist cooperatives that might be helpful as the group moves forward with the Visitor Center/Art Co-op development.

Section 1: Sample By Laws for a Main Street Type Artist Co-op in Yuma, AZ

Section 2: Articles Related to How To Start an Artist Co-op

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**SECTION 1: Example of Artist Co-op ByLaws**



**North End Artists' Co-op (NEAC), Yuma, Arizona**

The intent of the North End Artists' Co-op is to identify, recognize, and promote local artists and provide display and sales space for working artists. Both artists and community members alike will have the opportunity to view and learn about a wide variety of artists, media, culture, and issues that impact the arts locally and throughout the state.

You will find the requirements for participation and application information in the guidelines that follow. Applications should be presented to the current membership at their monthly meeting during their call to artists. NEAC vacancies will be posted on the NEAC website, [www.northendartists.com](http://www.northendartists.com). Applicants will be given an open forum at the beginning of the meeting slated for portfolio review to present their applications and portfolios. Once all potential new members have presented they will be excused and the current members will conduct the remainder of their regular business meeting and will then discuss and vote on the new applicants. A call of artists will only be given when space is available in the co-op. Each applicant must submit a \$25 non-refundable application fee at the time of presentation. If not immediately selected for the posted vacancy, the application will remain on file and active for the period of one year. Every applicant must provide a valid email where they can receive notification of their application standing.

The co-op meets at Yuma Art Center, 254 S. Main Street, Yuma, AZ 85364, at 5:30 PM on the first Wednesday of each month, August through June. Vacancies as well as other information can be found at [www.northendartists.com](http://www.northendartists.com).

#### PURPOSE:

The North End Artists' Co-op is dedicated to promoting artists living in Yuma area by providing them the opportunity to display and sell their professional quality, contemporary artworks in a set venue. The co-op is operated by its membership and is a self-sufficient organization.

#### HOURS OF OPERATION AND MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS:

The hours of operation are Saturday from 11:00am-3:00pm, September through May. A minimum of two co-op members will work each Saturday during the regular operating season. During the shift co-op members are expected to handle sales, create a pleasing interior display in the main gallery of the United, maintain the window displays as well as create work on site so that patrons may observe the artists working. Members are encouraged to bring in additional work to sell during their assigned weekend. Prints, series and complete sets of functional ware can be displayed and sold on these days however should not be displayed for sale in the windows mid-week. Each co-op member is expected to work at least nine shifts per year as well as attend, set up and help host the fall and spring receptions.

Members are expected to process all sales generated through the NEAC through the NEAC treasurer. All prices posted should include the sales tax and should be posted in whole dollars. The treasurer will distribute 75% of the base price as well as the applicable taxes back to the artist and 25% of the base price to the City of Yuma Arts and Cultural Commission for exchange of use of the space at the meeting immediately following the sale. Each member is responsible for paying their sales taxes.

Any member not fulfilling the required number of hours or who does not comply with the co-op guidelines including attendance at regular monthly meetings can be removed by a majority vote of members at any time. The members also reserve the right to periodically jury the quality of work currently on display. If it is not deemed professional quality the member may be asked to remove the work from the window or be asked to resign if it is an ongoing issue.

An annual dues membership of \$20 will be assessed every August in order to help cover administrative costs of the cooperative. Failure to pay annual dues by the October meeting terminates your membership in the co-op.

If the membership ever decides to dissolve the cooperative any proceeds generated from dues will be distributed to the current membership at a prorated rate based on length of membership.

#### THE SPACE:

Based upon the number of current members and the media and scale of their work, the co-op members will determine the number of pieces each may physically display as well as the number of members they feel the space can handle without becoming overcrowded.

Due to the public venue of the display space artwork that contains genitalia, breasts or disturbing content may not be displayed in the windows. If such content is within the scope of the artist's work it must be reserved for their portfolio that is available for review during the hours of operation.

In exchange for this space, each artist will donate 25% of each sale, after taxes, to the City of Yuma Arts and Cultural Commission. The commission provides the NEAC with both locking display windows facing Main, the interior main gallery on Saturdays, the utilities and maintenance as well as handling sales when the co-op members are not present. Minimal furnishing and other accommodations, including use of their safe, are also included. The co-op is responsible for providing its own display materials, change bank, maintaining the display windows and for leaving the main gallery in the same if not better fashion than when it was upon entry.

#### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL/LEADERSHIP:

The executive council will be elected each spring for the following season. Only the current members in good standing will be allowed to run for a position and/or vote for the new leadership. The executive council will be comprised of a manager, treasurer, secretary and PR committee.

The manager will handle the seasonal schedule, run the monthly meetings, oversee all executive offices and act as liaison between the co-op and the Yuma Arts and Cultural Commission.

The treasurer will maintain the Excel files that log all of the inventory and sales for the NEAC. At each monthly meeting the treasurer will give a financial report and will disburse proceeds from sales generated since the prior meeting. The prices posted include all applicable sales tax and the sales tax as well as 75% of the base price will be distributed to the artist while 25% of the base price will be paid to the Yuma Arts and Cultural Commission. All checks will be made out to the treasurer so that he/she may cash and distribute the money. The treasurer will also handle all reimbursements for other expenses as approved by the majority of the members and as reflected in the minutes. At the final meeting of each season the treasurer will provide a year end report.

The secretary will take minutes at all official meetings of the NEAC and will distribute them within ten days of the meeting to all current members via email as well as archive the minutes electronically for the organization. The secretary will also handle all other correspondence as deemed necessary by the manager and/or membership.

The PR committee will maintain the website and generate all printed and electronic materials that promote the organization such as press releases, brochures, flyers, business cards, Power Points, etc.

In the advent that one of the executive council cannot meet their responsibilities they may appoint another member to serve in their place for up to one month. If the executive member cannot serve in their slated position for more than a month a new member will be voted to serve the remainder of the term.

Other members may, as needed, be asked to perform other administrative/committee duties for the NEAC.

#### ADVERTISING AND MARKETING PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF YUMA:

The Yuma Arts and Cultural Commission will provide marketing for the NEAC via their monthly calendar and email notifications. The NEAC will also be mentioned in their monthly ads placed in The Sun as well as their weekly radio promotions for the Yuma Art Center. The Yuma Arts and Culture Commission also agrees to make copies of promotional material as long as the paper is provided by the NEAC. The city will also provide large, full color posters for promotional purposes as their budget allows. The NEAC manager and/or the PR committee shall approve all promotional materials before distribution. Images of artists and/or artwork shall not be used by the city for promotional material other than for the NEAC unless approved by the artist.

#### CRITERIA FOR PORTFOLIO REVIEW:

The following must be submitted in person during the call to artists:

- \* A word-processed cover letter stating the intent of your work, relevant biographical information, experience/education in the arts.
- \* Contact information including your name, physical address, mailing address, phone number, email and application date.
- \* Five to ten pieces of your work. Photographs or digital images are acceptable however the co-op prefers to review your work in person. All reproduced images should be labeled with artist, title, media and scale.
- \* A \$25.00 non-refundable application fee.
- \* Applications remain active for one calendar year from the time of submission.
- \* All materials will become the property of the NEAC after one year unless they are picked up by the applicant.

Applicants will only be allowed to present their portfolios when there is a call to artists posted on the NEAC website. All applicants are expected to present their portfolios and application material in person.

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## SECTION 2: Articles Related to How To Start an Artist Co-op

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### Article 1

March 03, 2008 by [Leslie Griffin](#)

Artists are creative souls, blessed with the ability turn ideas or concepts into tangible things. Forming a cooperative gallery is an excellent example of what a group of artists and creative individuals can achieve, when they work together. Cooperative galleries not only provide venue and opportunity for artists to exhibit and sell their works, but can also enrich the community in general by offering classes, seminars and social gatherings that revolve around arts-related topics. With careful planning, a little research and a lot of elbow grease, you may find that starting up a coop gallery is a bit easier than you thought.

## **20/20 Vision**

The first step is to decide on the focus or the vision that the gallery is to serve. Dedicate some time during your first planning meeting, specifically to develop and write a mission statement. If all of the founders are "on the same page," it is less likely for future misunderstandings to occur. A mission statement also provides a cohesive foundation for everybody concerned. For example, simply opening an art gallery isn't really as useful to investors, potential clients or the community, as providing a little information on the common focus. Does the gallery seek to promote education, or community outreach programs, or provide a space for the support of local artisans?

## **Communication**

Whenever you have a large group of people collaborating on any large project, it is crucial to set clearly defined parameters and delegate responsibilities. You need to come to group consensus as to the specifics of where, what, how and how much the project will require. Topics like potential locations for the gallery, possible architectural modifications to the space, aesthetic design ideas and funding sources for the project must be determined in advance. Ideally, the group should delegate specific tasks among members to spread the work evenly, as well as decide who is best suited for what. For example, if one member has previous experience with starting up a business, this person may make an excellent treasurer or a liaison to potential investors. If another has a gift for interior design, that individual might be best for creating drawings and plans for what the gallery will look like. An individual with experience in hiring or working with contractors can apply his/her knowledge in gathering estimates for potential renovations.

## **Dedication of Space: How big do we really need to be?**

Frequently, art galleries become the nexus for art-related gatherings. Therefore, it's helpful to consider how you intend to meet the needs of your members, as well as the community you serve. For example, if you plan to have frequent lectures, seminars and social events, you might need to dedicate an additional room towards accommodating those events. Other factors to consider are whether or not you intend to incorporate studio space for member usage or community classes, or if you wish to set up a cafe or sitting area for your patrons to relax in. If your space is limited, you may want to look into the feasibility of creating partnerships for venue with other area businesses, like cafes or community colleges. Working to develop win-win relationships with other businesses helps to secure your gallery as an integral part of the community.

## **Funding options: For profit or non profit?**

The largest obstacle is usually funding. If the project can't be financed between members, then the group must decide on how additional funding will be acquired. One way is to seek a small business loan, which can be a bit risky. Therefore, it is wise to set up some form incorporation which results in the gallery becoming its own legal business entity. There are many forms of incorporation, so it might be well worth it to consult with a local attorney who specializes in small business law. It's also a good idea to look into the possibility of acquiring investor backing from other area businesses and private sources. Essentially, the more money the group can raise up front, the easier it generally becomes to get a loan.

Another possibility is to consider filing for non profit or not for profit status, which has potential tax advantages, as well as additional funding sources and grant opportunities. This does not necessarily mean that you're committing to work for free. What it does involve, is adherence to specific laws and regulations that govern non profit and not for profit status in your area. Generally, the intent of a non-profit organization is working to serve the needs of the community, instead of making money as a primary objective. If the mission of your cooperative gallery is to bring artwork and art-related educational

resources to the community, then filing for non profit status may be an excellent option. However, a key difference could be in requiring members of a non profit coop to volunteer time tending the store, rather than hiring paid employees. Non profit board members can sometimes also draw a stipend to compensate for the time involved in carrying out certain administrative duties. Due to the complexities involved in filing non profit status, it is crucial to get sound legal advice beforehand.

### **Other things to consider**

It is important to plan a detailed budget, which includes all near future expenses, permitting, license fees, renovations, advertising costs, etc. For all new businesses, it's suggested that you also set aside enough capital to cover all your operating costs like rent, insurance and utilities, for six months to a year in advance. This allows you the time necessary to establish a clientele base.

Your gallery will likely attract other artists, once it has been established. Therefore, setting up a membership criterion and selection process for new members is a good idea. Do you require a time commitment of 50 hours a month towards tending the gallery? Are portfolios reviewed on a semi-annual schedule and voted on by the founding members? Will you accept only local artists? You'll want to have some information on hand, for potential new members.

Sweat-equity can go a long way towards keeping your costs down. Instead of hiring a professional painting crew, try having a "founders painting party." Nothing brings a community together like working side by side. Depending on the talents and resources of your members, you might consider building your own custom shelving, display cases and tables, instead of hiring a contractor. If some of your members are great at throwing parties, put them to work on planning a "grand opening gala". You might also want to include a raffle for a donated work of art (or a collaborative piece.)

Finally, have fun! Starting a coop gallery is bound to have some up-and-downs, but if the members are committed to the vision, the vision can certainly become a reality. Together, you can achieve great things!

## Article 2

### **Start a Co-op Gallery: 8 Tips, Posted on August 28, 2009 By Betsy Dillard Stroud**



#### **The Sage Brush Gallery in Taos, New Mexico**

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Sage Brush Gallery in Taos, New Mexico, a co-op operated by 10 artists. Because there are 10 of them, each artist "sits" with the gallery about three times a month. Twenty-five percent of the proceeds of each sale goes to the gallery's coffer, with the artist keeping



the other 75 percent.

Once a month, they rotate all the artists' work, moving the paintings around the gallery space so that each artist's work occupies a different space in the gallery. In the middle of the gallery, there's a space for the "Featured Artist," so that every 10 months, each of the artists gets an opportunity to show more work.

The gallery is eclectic, showing a variety of different approaches to art, but according to Lynn McLain, one of the artists, it works! Once a month, all the artists converge in a business meeting to discuss challenges and successes. They are in a lively shopping center in Taos, so there are always people milling about.

### **What's Important in Planning and Starting a Co-Op Gallery?**

1. Make sure the site is accessible to the public. The Sage Brush Gallery is situated in a well-known shopping center. A well-frequented street or mall will provide ready access to tourists and potential collectors (and you won't have to spend money on advertising). A place, for instance, near a good urban hotel is ideal.
2. Try to assemble a group of artists whose collective work displays different styles, different modes of expression, different media.
3. Create a schedule that works for everybody. Be fair. Rotate shows. Each artist could show work for three weeks, for instance. Plan at least one group show per year featuring all the gallery artists.
4. It's a good practice to have one work by each gallery artist constantly on display in the gallery. All the artists should have portfolios available.
5. Realize that a "cooperative" means that everyone has to work; the labor has to be distributed equally. Someone needs to be at the gallery at all times to greet people; someone has to take care of paperwork and keep the books; someone has to install work; someone must act as a registrar recording inventory; someone has to clean up; plan openings, etc.
6. To attract more foot traffic, stage themed shows, especially around the holidays. A show of small works is perfect, for example, since people will be looking for gifts.
7. Stage at least one open house every year.
8. Become a good member of the community. Partner with nearby businesses; a restaurant or bar can provide wine and treats in return for a prominent sign advertising the business, for example.



## Article 3

August 28, 2009 by [Lou Belcher](#)

In a co-op art gallery, all the artists share in the expenses and in operating the gallery. So, for the artist, it takes commitment of time as well as money when getting started. Usually one or two artists start the gallery and add artists as they go along. Here are the basic steps on how to start a co-op art gallery:

1. Determine the parameters of the gallery including what media of art will be represented, how many artists will be involved, and if classes and workshops will be offered. The reason to determine these things first is to have a basic structure for moving forward and to know how much space you need when you start looking for a likely location.
2. Find and rent space for the co-op.
3. Develop a [business plan](#) and set up the business entity of your co-op art gallery including obtaining all the appropriate business licenses and permits to operate the business.
4. Develop forms for the intake of artists into the gallery, including applications and evaluation forms for the screening committee to use in evaluating applicants and their artwork.
5. Determine your sources of income and how much each artist will need to contribute monthly to meet the expenses of the business until the co-op begins selling art.
6. Advertise for artists to join the co-op. Screen the applicants and make appointments for those who pass the screening to have their artwork juried by current members and for an interview of the artist to ensure that they fit and agree with the goals and objectives of the co-op.
7. Organize the workings of the co-op, including setting up a schedule for members to physically run the gallery, determining what classes will be offered, and setting up and disseminating rules and operational guidelines to all members of the gallery. Assign tasks to different members of the gallery according to their strengths. At the very least, someone will need to handle publicity and someone will have to be in charge of exhibits.
8. Determine colors and content for promotional materials, such as business cards for all members, brochures to advertise the gallery, and a website to ensure people can find the gallery.
9. Begin to promote the gallery. Write press releases and distribute them to writers at newspapers, local magazines, and local blogs to get the word out to the public. Invite the writers to the gallery to get to know them and how they like notices submitted to them and to give them a chance to get to know the gallery.
10. Schedule and advertise a grand opening. Divide the space so each artist has equal viewing space. Hang the art and open the doors.
11. Some co-ops also take in consignment work to ensure that they sell enough to meet expenses.

One of the most important aspects of setting up a co-op art gallery is to choose good artists and compatible artists. The quickest way for a co-op art gallery to fall apart is to gather together people who don't get along and don't work well together. Therefore the process of adding members is crucial. All

members should be willing to sell the art of others on their days to work in the gallery. The gallery needs to be beautiful, but it also needs to sell works to stay afloat.

## Article 4

**Updated:** October 24, 2011 by [Susan Hibberd](#)

Running a gallery is a dream that many artists have, but never think will come true. By starting up a gallery with a group of friends, it is a dream that is easily within your reach.

The benefits of running a co-operative gallery are enormous. It spreads the cost, spreads the risk, and means that there are many more people to pick up all those little jobs that need doing.

### PEOPLE

The first thing you need to do is to find a group of people that you feel you can work with and trust. You need to be able to trust them with your money, and also trust them to do the jobs they have said they will do. You need to know that these jobs will be done on time and to a high standard, and you need to know that any money promised will actually materialize when it is needed.

Have lots of meetings. I know it sounds like a waste of time when you could be looking at property, but this really will pay dividends later on. Make sure you know what everyone's strengths and weaknesses are, what amount of time they can give to the project, and how much money they can put in.

Allocate roles to everyone - this should be run like a small business, not a party!

### MONEY

Find out if you can finance the project from within the group, and if not, go to banks and other places to get a business loan. You can also see if there is funding available to help you set up. Sadly, most money will go to areas in need of regeneration, which aren't the best places to put art galleries!

### PREMISES

Spend a long time looking at different premises. Before you go out, make a list of the things you will need. Will you need an office? a bathroom? storage? workroom? What access will you need? How much parking do you think will be necessary?

Look carefully at the area you want to have your gallery in. Is it an arty area already? Is there a ready market? Is it on the way up or on the way down? What will be your competition?

### FINDING ARTISTS

The chances are, you will have lots of friends who want to exhibit. To start with, you can probably put a program together from within the group. Advertise in the local press for local artists, or in arts magazines for national and international people. You won't have any shortage of people looking for space!

### INSURANCE

Don't forget to look at the proper insurance for the space. This will need to cover the public, the artwork and the people working there.

#### EXTRA INCOME

Make extra income by hiring out the space in between exhibition for workshops, by selling cards and prints etc, and by offering services to the people who exhibit, like arranging the private view.

#### ADVERTISE

I cannot stress the need for advertising enough. This is the way that people will know where you are and get a feel for the quality of the place. Use all the free advertising ways you can, e.g. press releases. Invite people in for open days. Buy bumper stickers and give them away. Get your local council on board and ask them to advertise it on their websites.

You will all be putting in a lot of work if you start up a project like this, but it can be very rewarding.

### Article 5

March 04, 2008 by [Pat Merewether](#)

I currently belong to a co-op art gallery and the people who set it up have done a wonderful job. It's only a few years old, but the owners have worked very hard to make the gallery more attractive and successful. Also, figure out how much start-up money you will need - and assume you'll need more.

Location: Our gallery, Art At The Market, is located in a building connected with the Farmers' Market and next to a very successful restaurant. Like the old saying goes, location, location, location."

Promotion: No matter how great the location, people need to know about you. We're posted on the Market's web site, we participate in charity events, pass our fliers and try to spread the news by word of mouth. Our gallery works closely with the city and is included in promotional materials published announcing events hosted in and by the city.

Each member is juried in. This is mostly to keep a variety of artwork available to the patrons. There is a limit for wall art, pottery, jewelry, etc. Being juried in also helps potential new members meet the board and learn about the gallery and the rules.

Each member is given the same size space. This can be difficult, but it's important to give everyone an equal chance to display their art. We recently gave each artist a specific spot instead of having the artists all mixed together. This made it very obvious that some members were exceeding their allotted square feet and eliminated the growing frustration of those who felt crowded out.

We each pay twenty-five dollars a month and have to work one four-hour shift per month. The gallery is only open three days a week, and we have enough members to cover all of the shifts.

The gallery does not take any cut from the sale of art. This is very nice and helps us budget for paying our rent. Nothing is more disconcerting than to sell a painting for a hundred dollars and have to hand over

## WORK PRODUCT FIVE

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### **Easton Shovel Town Cultural District**

**To:** Carolyn Cole  
**From:** Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates (On behalf of  
DHCD Downtown Initiative Program)  
**Subject:** Review of Preliminary Materials for Cultural District Application  
**Date:** September 14, 2012

I downloaded the various pdf files that you forwarded. It looks like you are making great progress. I know that these are very preliminary documents and that you are in the process of adding content and editing, but, as you requested, I am providing a few comments below that hopefully will be helpful as you proceed.

When I reviewed some of the materials you sent, it was not clear exactly how they corresponded to required sections in the Cultural District Application. For example, the document that you sent entitled draft application, I assume is for the Cultural District Narrative Section of the application. It has a logical flow to it but I am not sure that it entirely lines up with the specific questions asked in the application and it exceeds the word limit for the first question.

I think it would be helpful if you reviewed the actual application available on the MCC website. [www.massculturalcouncil.org/](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/) Go to Programs, select Cultural Districts. If you have not created a profile, you will have to do that before viewing the application. Tip: make sure you provide a profile for an organization, not an individual, or it will not allow you to open the application. Then select "Start Application" and you will be able to view all sections and questions.

The CD Application is structured as an online form that you fill out with specific limits on the amount of characters for each answer. I suggest that you create your responses in a word document, do your editing, and then cut and paste them into the online form when you are ready to apply. I think this will help you make sure that you target your responses specifically to the questions asked as well as the mechanics of completing the form.

I have created a word document that should be helpful to you. It contains the application questions that require lengthy narrative responses (along with the character limit). I am providing this document as an attachment to this memo. You can draft your response to each question and then use the "word count" function under the "Tools" menu to determine if you are under the limit for each response. Then you can edit your responses and when finalized, cut and paste it into the MCC form document.

Before you copy and paste data from a word processor into the online application, save your text in the word processor as "text only." To do this:

- In Microsoft Word, save your information by selecting "Save As" from the File menu. The "Save As" dialog box will then appear.
- Choose "text only" from the "Save as Type" drop down box found at the bottom of the dialog box. Your work will then be saved as "text only" and the filename will include a .txt extension.

It looks like you have made a lot of progress on your vision, goals and strategies. You sent two different goals documents and I was not quite sure which one was the more advanced version. But, in any case I can see you are making great progress and I know you will be continuing to refine these. A few things that popped out at me as I read your documents as follows.

- Perhaps goal 3 might be to: "establish an artist cooperative" and "develop operating guidelines" could be an objective or action step under that goal.
- Perhaps goal 4 could be "Increase gallery space in the Cultural District" rather than "Research gallery space . . ." An "Increase" seems to be what you are striving for and goes with the strategies you have listed.
- It seems odd to single out the chairman of Oakes Memorial Hall in goal 5, perhaps the goal could just be something like "Facilitate full utilization of Oakes Aims Hall as a venue for music and culture."
- Your goals seem light with regard to economic development. You have a goal about "involving businesses in activities" but there does not seem to be specific goals regarding promoting business development by increasing foot traffic/sales for local businesses and encouraging attraction/development of new businesses.

The map that you sent does a good job of identifying cultural assets but does not delineate the boundaries of the Cultural District. I see a dashed line on the map but I am not sure what that signifies. I did not think it was the CD boundaries because there is no Northern or Eastern boundary shown. When you draw your boundaries, encompass the buildings that you want to include rather than stopping at the street edge. I think you intend to have the Eastern boundary go all the way to Washington Street. If that is the case, you should make sure there is justification for that. Remember the boundaries should highlight the cultural facilities and be compact and walkable.

ATTACHMENT: WORD Document with Narrative Application Questions

thirty of it to someone else. This also allows us to lower our prices and makes buying and selling art easier.

There is a general meeting every-other Wednesday night. At this time schedule sheets are passed around and each member signs up for their shift. Checks for sold art are also distributed at this time. At the meetings members discuss successes, concerns and event information they want to share.

I'm sure more changes will be made in the future to make it an even better gallery, but what they've done so far makes it work very smoothly.